

# WESTERN CITIZEN--Extra.

PAINTS. KENTUCKY,  
TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 11, 1861.

## To the People of Kentucky.

Having been elected by you as your delegates to "A Convention of the Border Slave States, and such other Slave States as have not passed ordinances of secession," with power to meet with delegates from other States in convention "to consult on the critical condition of the country, and agree upon some plan of adjustment," and having met, at Frankfort, on the 27th of May, in pursuance of the act; we deem it proper to inform you, briefly, of what was done by us in the Convention.

It was a matter of regret to us that while the call for this Convention originated in Virginia and had, apparently, the concurrence of all the Border Slave States, yet there were delegates in attendance from Kentucky and Missouri only. One representative chosen by the counties of McMinn and Sevier, in Tennessee, appeared, and, although, not coming with such credentials as were necessary to constitute a delegate, he was invited to participate in our deliberations.

After a continuous session from day to day, during which the condition of the country and the various causes that led to it were maturely considered, it was resolved that the Convention should address an appeal to the people of the United States, and the delegates from Kentucky determined to present to you a separate address in which the views of your members should be embodied. In the discharge of this duty we now attempt to address you.

Your State, on a deliberate consideration of her responsibilities—moral, political and social—has determined, that the proper course for her to pursue is to take no part in the controversy between the government and the seceded States but that of mediator and intercessor. She is unwilling to take up arms against her brethren residing either North or South of the geographical line by which they are unhappily divided into warring sections. This course was recommended to her by every consideration of patriotism, and by a proper regard for her own security. It does not result from timidity; on the contrary, it could only have been adopted by a brave people—so brave that the least imputation on their courage would be branded as false by their written and traditional history.

Kentucky was right in taking this position—because, from the commencement of this deplorable controversy, her voice was for reconciliation, compromise and peace. She had no cause of complaint against the General Government, and made none. The injuries she sustained in her property from a failure to execute laws passed for its protection, in consequence of illegal interference by wicked and deluded citizens in the free States, she considered as wholly insufficient to justify a dismemberment of the Union. That, she regarded as no remedy for existing evils, but an aggravation of them all. She witnessed, it is true, with deep concern, the growth of a wild and frenzied fanaticism in one section, and a reckless and defiant spirit in another, both equally threatening destruction to the country; and tried earnestly to arrest them, but in vain. We will not stop to trace the causes of the unhappy condition in which we are now placed, or to censurate either of the sections to the dishonor of the other, but can say that we believed both to have been wrong, and, in their madness and folly, to have inaugurated a war that the Christian World looks upon with amazement and sorrow; and that Liberty, Christianity and Civilization stands appalled at the horrors to which it will give rise.

It is a proud and grand thing for Kentucky to stand up and say, as she can, truthfully, in the face of the world "we had no hand in this thing;" our slaves are clear. And, in looking at the portion that prevails elsewhere—beholding freedom of speech denied to American citizens, their homesteads subjected to lawless visitation, their property confiscated, and their persons liable to incarceration and search—how

grandly does she not loom up, as she proclaims to the oppressed and miserable, we offer you a refuge! Here constitutional law and respect for individual rights, still exist! Here is an asylum where loyalty to the name, nation and Flag of the Union predominate; and here is the only place, in this lately great Republic, where true freedom remains—that freedom for which our fathers fought—the citizen being free to speak, write, or publish anything he may wish, responsible only to the laws, and not controlled by the violence of the mob.

Is not this an attitude worthy of a great people, and do not her position and safety require her to maintain it? If she deviates from it; if she suffers herself in a moment of excitement to be led off by sympathy with one side or the other—to ally herself with either section—inevitable and speedy ruin must fall upon her. What reason can be urged to incline her to such a fatal step? She is still, thank God, a member of the Union, owing constitutional allegiance to it—an allegiance voluntarily given, long maintained, and from which she has derived countless benefits. Can she, by her own act, forfeit this allegiance, and by the exercise of any constitutional power, sever herself from that Government? In our opinion the statement of the proposition insures its rejection. It is of no more rational force than the argument of the suicide to commit self-slaughter. Secession is not a right. That the right of revolution exists is as true in States as the right of self-defense is true of individuals. It does not exist by virtue of legal enactment or constitutional provision, but is founded in the nature of things—is inalienable and indestructible, and ought to be resorted to, only when all peaceable remedies fail. Revolution is an extreme remedy, finds its justification alone in an escape from intolerable oppression, and hazarding the consequences of failure, as success or defeat makes the movement one of righteous resistance or retaliation; it becomes the stern duty of Kentucky to look not only to the motives that might impel her to revolt, but to the probable results. She must contemplate her condition in a complex character—National and State—and see what must be her fate in the event of a separation.

Under the National Government, she has a right to the protection of thirty-three great States, and with them, thus protected, can defy the world in arms. Under it, she has become prosperous and happy. Deprived of it, she finds herself exposed to imminent danger. She has a border front on the Ohio river of near seven hundred miles, with three powerful States on that border. She has four hundred miles on the South by which she is separated from Tennessee by a merely conventional line. Her eastern front is on Virginia, and part of her western on Missouri—thus making her antagonistic, in the event of collision, to Virginia, which is our mother, and to Missouri, which is our daughter. Hemmed in thus on every side by powers—each one of which is equal to her own—her situation, and her sense of loyalty to the Union, imperatively demand of her to insist on the integrity of the Union, its constitution and government. Peace is of vital consequence to her, and can only be secured to her by preserving the Union inviolate. Kentucky has no cause of quarrel with the Constitution, and no wish to quarrel with her neighbors; but abundant reason to love both. Of the great west she was the pioneer, and became the starting point of emigration all around her. There is not a western or southwestern State in which Kentucky families are not settled, and she is bound to all by ties of interest and brotherhood. She has ever been loyal to the government, answering to its requisitions, and sharing its burthens. At the command of that government, when war was declared to protect the rights of *Sailors*, although she had no vessels to float on the ocean, yet she offered up her blood freely in the common defense from the lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Again, when war, growing out of a territorial controversy, far from her own borders, was proclaimed, she was amongst the foremost in the fight, and Monterey and Buena Vista were made famous in history by the valor of Kentuckians. Never has she fal-

tered in her duty to the Union.

In declining to respond to a call made by the present administration of the Government, and one that we have reason to believe would not have been made if the administration had been fully advised of the circumstances by which we were surrounded. Kentucky did not put herself in a position of opposition to her legitimate obligations; she did not choose to throw herself in hostile collision with the slave States of Missouri, Maryland and Delaware, which have not seceded on the one hand, nor the slave States which have and are in process of secession on the other, and shed the blood of brethren and kindred at the very moment when she was striving to be an apostle of peace. Nature herself revolted at the thought, and her conduct in this matter had so much of love to God, and love to man, in it, that it will meet the sanction of an approving world. So far from being denounced for this action, it is everywhere looked upon as an act of purest patriotism, resulting from imperious necessity, and the highest instincts of self-preservation—respected by the very administration that alone could have complained of it, and will we doubt not, be ratified by it; if not in terms, at least by its future action. That act did not take her out of the Union.

Kentucky, in so grave a matter as this, passes by mere legal technicalities, and a discussion of theoretical difficulties of Government, poises herself upon her right to do what the necessities of her condition imperatively demanded of her, and relies upon the good sense and magnanimity of her sister States, seeing that there is no parallel in her condition and theirs to do her justice. In all things she is as loyal as ever to the Constitutional administration of the government. She will follow the stars and stripes to the utmost regions of the earth, and defend it from foreign insult. She refuses alliance with any who would destroy the Union. All she asks is permission to keep out of this unnatural strife. When called to take part in it, she believes that there is more honor in the breach than in the observance of any supposed duty to perform it.

Feeling that she is clearly right in this, and has announced her intention to refrain from aggression upon others, she must protest against her soil being made the theatre of military operations by any belligerent. The war must not be transferred, by the warring sections, from their own to her borders. Such unfriendly action cannot be viewed with indifference by Kentucky.

Having thus referred to this subject in its general aspects, we would invite your undivided attention to its direct bearings upon yourselves.

It is not now a question of party politics, although it may be the interest of some to make it so. The day of mere party platforms has, we trust, gone forever. It has passed from being a mere struggle for place that may gratify personal ambition, to one for the present and future welfare of a whole people, for the safety of homes and firesides. Whatever divisions have heretofore existed should now cease. In times past, in our elections, the questions which divided men related to mere party differences, and the members of all the parties rivaled each other in their expression of devotion to the Union, and were equally clamorous for their rights in the Union and not out of it. Now these party differences are passed away and forgotten. The first question is Union or no Union—Government or no Government—Nationality. Before this grand and commanding question everything else gives away.

All can see that such a state of things cannot continue without a war, and that such a war was unnecessary. It resulted from the ambition of men, rather than from the wrongs done to the people. There was a remedy for everything, already provided by the Constitution, which, with wise foresight, provided against the trials to which it might be subjected. There were coexisting powers to check encroachments, whether by a President or by Congress; and it so happened that at this dangerous crisis, when a sectional President had been elected, there was a majority in opposition to him in both houses of Con-

gress, by which he could have been controlled, and the People protected. It was the duty of the opposition to have stood to their posts till the danger of encroachment had passed away. But Senators and Representatives, following the example of their States, vacated their seats and placed a President who would have been in a minority at the head of a triumphant majority—it was a *great wrong* for which they must answer to posterity. Kentucky remained true to herself, contending with all her might for what were considered to be the rights of the people, and although one after another of the States that should have been by her side ungenerously deserted her, leaving her almost alone in the field, yet she did not surrender her rights under the Constitution, and never will surrender them. She will appear again in the Congress of the United States, not having conceded the least atom of power to the Government that had not heretofore been granted, and retaining every power she had reserved. She will insist upon her constitutional rights in the Union, and not out of it.

Kentucky is grieved to think that anything should have been done by her sister States that has made it necessary for her to assume the position she now occupies. It is not one of submission as it has been insultingly called—it is one of the most exalted patriotism. But if she had no higher or holier motive; if she were not earnestly for Peace among her brethren; the great law of self-protection points out her course, and she has no alternative. Already one section declares that there will be no war at home, but that it shall be in Kentucky and Virginia. Already the cannon and bayonets of another section are visible on our most exposed border. Let those hostile armies meet on our soil, and it will matter but little to us which may succeed, for destruction to us will be the inevitable result. Our fields will be laid waste, our houses and cities will be burned, our people will be slain, and this goodly land be re-baptised "the land of blood." And even the institution, to preserve or control which this wretched war was undertaken, will be extirpated in the general ruin. Such is the evil that others will bring upon us, no matter which side we take, if this is to be the battlefield. But there is danger at home even more appalling than any that comes from beyond. People of Kentucky look well to it that you do not get to fighting among yourselves, for then, indeed, you will find, that it is an ill fight where he that wins has the worst of it. Endeavor to be of one mind, and strive to keep the State steady in her present position. Hold fast to that sheet anchor of republican liberty, that the will of the majority constitutionally and legally expressed must govern. You have, in the election by which this Convention was chosen, displayed a unanimity unparalleled in your history. May you be as unanimous in the future; may your majorities be so decided that a refusal to obey may be justly called *factious*. Trust and love one another. Avoid angry strife. Frown upon the petty ambition of demagogues who would stir up bad passions among you. Consider, as wise men, what is necessary for your own best interest, and in humble submission trust and look to that Almighty Being, who has heretofore so signally blessed us as a nation for His guidance through the gloom and darkness of this hour.

J. J. CRITTENDEN, President.  
JAS. GUTHRIE, \*  
R. K. WILLIAMS,  
ARCH'D DIXON,  
F. M. BRISTOW,  
JOSHUA F. BELL,  
C. A. WICKLIFFE,  
G. W. DUNLAP,  
C. S. MOREHEAD, \*  
J. F. ROBINSON,  
JNO. B. HUSTON,  
ROB'T. RICHARDSON,

\* I have signed the foregoing address, because I approve of the policy therein indicated, of refusing to furnish troops to the general government to prosecute the civil war now going on, and the policy of neutrality, without considering myself committed to all that is said upon other matters.

C. S. MOREHEAD.

